UNIT 3

COMPONENTS OF CASE WORK

(Helen Harris Perlman)

COMPONENTS OF CASE WORK: Person, Problem, Place ,Process/ Procedure , Professional representative. The concerned topics:- Relationship in case work client, The problem solving work.

Social Case Work is the process to help the individual. Help is to be given to him to make him:-

1. Self Sufficient

2. Confidant

3. Independent.

The nucleus of social case work is given by HH Pearlman as the following;

*"A **Person** with a **Problem** comes to a **Place** where he is helped by a **Professional Representative** by a given helping **Process**."*

The helping process have got different elements or components.

There are five components of SCW.

   I. PERSON

   II. PROBLEM

   III. PLACE

   IV. PROCESS/ PROCEDURE

   V. PROFESSIONAL REPRESENTATIVE

THE CONCERNED TOPICS:-

   I. RELATIONSHIP IN CASE WORK CLIENT

   II. THE PROBLEM SOLVING WORK

Now we will discuss them in brief:

I. PERSON:

The person is known as Client in the professional language of SCW. The person can be a man, woman, a young, child or aged or anyone who finds himself, or is found to be in need of help in some aspect of his social emotional living. Here client means

the special person who has some problem. Every person in this world faces problems. Like common people the client is also a human being having likes and dislikes. These likes and dislikes create strengths and weaknesses in the personality of the client. So he got the problem due to the weaknesses. Or in a psychoanalytical perspective when his ego is unable to make the decisions between right and wrong, good and bad so then he becomes under stresses and got the problem. The first effort is to solve the problem by his own efforts. But when the problems do not seem to be solved by his personal efforts then he needs external support for its solution. This external support is given to him professionally by the social worker. The case worker should be so polite & patient that he should listen the full comments of the client. Whatever he is saying about his self, his family, friends, work mates his environment, every comment should very carefully be listened. In professional language a problematic person is called "problem suffering person". When a workers deals with the client his attitude should be so polite and friendly so that the client considers him as his best friend in the society.

The case worker should keep in mind:

- The person's behavior has this purpose and meaning: to gain satisfactions, to avoid or dissolve frustration and to maintain his balance-in-movement.

- Whether a person's behavior is or is not effective in promoting his well-being depends in large part upon the functioning of his personality structure.

- The structure and functioning of personality are the products of inherited and constitutional equipment in continuous interaction with the physical, psychological and social environment the person experiences.

- A person at any stage of his life-not only is a product of nature and nurture but is also and always in process of being in the present and becoming in the future.

- The person's being and becoming behavior is both shaped and judged by the expectations he and his culture have invested in the social role he carries.

- The person who comes as a client to a social agency is always under stress.

To understand human behavior and individual difference, Grace Mathew has given the following propositions:

1. An individual's behavior is conditioned by his/her environment and his/her experiences. Behavior refers to reacting, feeling, thinking, etc. the conditions and influences surrounding the person constitutes the environment.

2. For human growth and development it is essential that certain basic needs should be met. (Maslow's hierarchy of needs)

3. Emotional needs are real and they cannot be met or removed through intellectual reasoning.

4. Behaviour is purposeful and is in response to the individual's physical and emotional needs.

5. Other people's behavior can be understood only in terms of one's own emotional and intellectual comprehension.

II. PROBLEM:

The problem is the situation which disturbs the normal social functioning of any individual from the approved culturally set norms. A problem is a situation which is the outcome of the circumstances. A problem is a situation, event, or anything which impairs the normal functioning of the individual and makes him handicapped. Problem arises from some need or accumulation of frustrations or maladjustment, and sometimes all of these together.

H.H Pearlman: A problem is a situation which exist anywhere anytime and effects any person, [It creates Hurdles in the life of a person. When these hurdles are there. The people became Conscious of it and tries to find out a solution. Sometimes the problem is solved by one's own efforts but sometime he needs External Help.] The problem has two types of impacts *"Intra Personal Problem" "Inter Personal Problem"*. Intrapersonal is that problem which is related to one's own personality or self, it is the problem which do not affect the other person but the concerned person his self. For example if a client has only one kidney, or a very simple example is that if a student have to write down the lecture in the class but he has no pen to write, it is his problem

and it is affecting him only. Interpersonal is that problem which affects more than one person. Its impact is on the others also. For example drug addiction, crime, theft, or more simple if in the class room during the lecture, someone's mobile ring raises then the attention of all the students is diverted to that ring. The person whose ring was raised is also affected and disturbed by this and the all other class fellows, and their teacher too.

The problems within the purview of social casework are those which vitally affect or are affected by a person's social functioning. The multifaceted and dynamic nature of the client's problem makes necessary the selection by caseworker and client some part of it as the unit for work. The choice of problem depends on

(1) whether the problem is the client's problem

(2) leadership given by case worker depends upon the professional knowledge and judgment

(3) Agency's function e.g. hospital, etc.

■ Problems in any part of a human being's living tend to have chain reactions. .... cause>effect>cause.

■ Any problem which a person encounters has both an objective and subjective significance quality and intensity of our feelings.

■ Not only do the external (objective) and internal (subjective) aspects of the problem co-exist, but either may be the cause of the other.

■ Whatever the nature of the problem the person brings to social agency; it is always accompanied and often complicated by the problem of being a client.

Problems can be categorized as follows (Grace Mathew):

1. Problems related to illness and disabilities

2. Problems due to lack of material resources.

3. School related problems.

4. Problems related to institutionalization.

5. Behaviour problems.

6. Problems of marital discord.

7. Problem situations needing a follow-up service.

8. Needs related to rehabilitation of people.

9. Clients caught up in social problems like gambling, prostitution, alcoholism, drug addiction and unmarried motherhood.

Types of problems:

There is probably no problem in human living that has not been brought to social workers in social agencies. Problem of hunger for food and hunger for love, of seeking shelter and of wanting to run away, of getting to married and of staying to married, of needing money and of wasting money, of not wanting to live and of not wanting to die, of making enemies and of needing friends, of wanting and not wanting medications. In the heave of the so many problems, it seems to me important to differentiate or categorize the different problems. So to understand them easily

Physiological Problem: Physiological problems are related to the physic of the person, i.e. the bodily impaired functioning problems. e.g. all the disabilities of the body, problem of weak eyesight, hearing impairment, speech impairment, organically handicapped both internal , heart, kidney, lung, intestine, appetite, nausea etc or external , no leg or one leg, hand, blind, deaf, dumb etc.

Economic problems: Every individual in this world is facing economic problems. economically the society is divided into three groups. Each of them is further divided into three groups; **Upper** Upper-Upper Middle-Upper Lower-Upper, **Middle** Upper-Middle Middle-Middle Lower-Middle, **Lower** Upper-Lower Middle-Lower Lower-Lower. But we divide them into two groups, namely; "Haves" "Have-Nots", Haves mean those people who have chances for development or getting to be developed. Have nots mean those people who are deprived of having the chances for developing themselves or who have not found the chances for development. Now all these groups have the economic problems. the haves will try to get more and more financial rewards to buy a new BMW car or other latest model which no other person has as a property. The have-nots are simply wanting more and more money or they really need economic assistance. They are in the want of money, so that they can fulfill their needs. Economic problems

are related to the management of needs and resources a person have. If a person has managed his needs to his resource, then he will be facing no economic problem.

Psychological Problems: Psychology is the study of mind and behavior. It is the study of what we think and what we do. Psychological problems occur when a person is disturbed by some external circumstances. Psychological problem is the outcome of environment and circumstances. For example, a lecturer is starved and he has to deliver the lecture right now after a few minutes. Because of this situation his lecture would not be as good as if he has eaten something and then comes to the lecture. Anxiety, depression, schizophrenia, frustration, and anger are the examples of the psychological problems.

Relationship problems: Human being is a bio-psycho-social entity. Man lives in the society. He is engaged in different interpersonal relationships, e.g. relationship between a buyer and seller, teacher and student, parent and sibling, brother and sister, husband and wife etc. Sometimes there comes some problem in maintaining these relations, e.g. anger between husband and wife which leads to divorce, or problem of a person who cannot face the peoples, i.e. a phobia person. When a person encounters these problems he then comes to an agency where he is given helped by social worker or other professionals.

III. PLACE:

A place is any agency which offers social services or the department of any agency which is built for social services. It is a particular kind of social services agency in that it deals do not deals with social problems at large but the individual level problem, the individuals who are facing the management problems of their lives. Its purpose is to help those individuals whose normal functioning in daily life is disturbed i.e. his person-to-person, person-to-family, person-to-group or person-to-situation relationships. The social services agencies are of three kinds; Government agency or organization, Non-Governmental Agency or organization, Semi-Governmental Agency. Government agencies are fully financially supported by the government. It do not take aid from any other source. Its source of funds is the govt itself. Secondly its programs are planned and

implemented by the professionals of social services i.e. by the govt experts. Thirdly it has an accountability system. Govt agencies are held accountable for their expenditures. Fourthly its staff is totally paid staff and professionally skilled persons are given jobs in govt agencies. Non-Govt Organizations (NGOs) are fully financially supported by the public donations. Its programs are planned and implemented by the people who have established that NGO. The programs may be planned by professional or non-professionals. It has no accountability for its funds expenditures i.e. no check and balance. No one is authorized; even govt can't check their accounts. Its staff includes more volunteers and less paid employees. Volunteers are the main force of NGOs. Semi-Govt organizations are those which are started by the people, they realize a need for an organizational effort to lead a campaign against a social problem. The govt give them a little financial support in the shape of grants, i.e. 30% govt and 70% the organization itself. It has an accountability system. It is accountable to the govt. its staff includes more paid and less volunteer employees. The case work services are offered in all the three kinds of agencies.

The case worker should keep in mind:

- The social agency is an organization fashioned to express the will of a society or of some group in that society as to social welfare-community decides the need of the agency.

- Each social agency develops a program by which to meet the particular areas of need with which it sets out to deal. It depends on factors like money, knowledge and competence of the agency staff, the interest, resources available and support of the community.

- The social agency has a structure by which it organizes and delegates its responsibilities and tasks, and governing policies and procedures Hierarchy-roles and responsibilities clear, designated and delegated-collaboration procedures and policies, understand the usefulness by which it stabilizes and systematizes its operations among workers.

- The social agency is a living, adaptable organism susceptible to being

understood and changed, much as other living organisms.- Past, present and future-not static and fixed.

- Every staff member in an agency speaks and acts for some part of the agency's function, and the case worker represents the agency in its individualized problem solving help. - Case worker not an independent professional practitioner- Case worker speaks and acts for the agency- psychologically identified with its purpose and policies.

- The case worker while representing his agency is first and foremost a representative of his profession - must know and be committed with feeling to the philosophy that guides the practice of the social work profession.

- Agency- Private e.g. funding agencies, Public e.g. family welfare orgs., Primary e.g. NGO, Secondary e.g. Hospitals, schools, etc. were based on functions-child welfare, family welfare, education, specialization based.

Also differs based on Source of support, Professional authority, Clientele they serve, Services they offer, Goals of the agency, etc.

IV. Process:

The dictionary meaning of process is; · A series of actions directed toward a particular aim. The process of the casework is like the process of a medical doctor (MD). Process in casework means an organized method of helping people to let them out of trouble. The idea of casework process stems from a natural process in human being, i.e. problem-solving-process. it is a natural process through which individual continuously try to adjust themselves to the environment or adapt the environment to themselves, so as to achieve maximum satisfaction. This process is concerned with two kinds of problems; replacing discomfort or dissatisfaction with comfort or satisfaction, or comfort and seeking to achieve greater or more satisfaction. The case work process always requires the full involvement and participation of the client himself. The caseworker stimulates and encourages the person as a feeling, thinking and doing person. To stimulate a person to feel and think about his problem, a professional must have a clear idea of the overall process of doing so. The process of casework as given by H.H. Pearlman has three phases; « Study « Diagnoses « Treatment. Some people has given five phases of

casework which includes the following; « Study « Assessment « Intervention « Treatment « Follow-up. But now here I will try to explain the simple process given by Pearlman (below).

In order to understand what the case work process must include in its problem-solving help, it is necessary to take stock first of the kinds of blockings which occur in people's normal problem-solving efforts. The six are:

1. If necessary tangible means and resources are not available to the person.

2. Out of ignorance or misapprehension about the facts of the problem or the facts of existing ways of meeting it.

3. If the person is depleted or drained of emotional or physical energy.

4. Some problems arouse high feelings in a person emotions so strong that they overpower his reason and defy (disobey) his conscious controls.

5. Problem may lie within the person; he may have become subject to, or victim of, emotions that chronically, over a long time, have governed his thinking and action.

6. Haven't developed systematic habits or orderly method of things and planning.

The intent of the case work process is to engage the person himself both in working on and coping with the one or several problems that confront him and to do so by such means as may stand him in good stead as he goes forward in living.

The means are

1. The provision of a therapeutic relationship

2. The provision of a systematic and flexible way

3. Provision of such opportunities and aids.

All competent problem-solving, as contrasted with trail-and-error method, contains three essential operations. Urgent pressures will often dislodge their sequence; botany conscious effort to move from quandary (difficulty) to solution must involve **these modes of action**:

1. Study (fact-finding)

Study (fact-finding)-the dictionary meaning of study is "*to learn about a*

particular subject by reading and researching". Study in social casework refers to the process of collecting information regarding the client and his problem. The information is mostly collected through the interviews. The first source of the information is the client itself, but when the client is unable to give the information then the caseworker turn over to the secondary resources, who can be his family, friends or relatives. The focus of the initial interview is to collect the information about the identification of the client (e.g. name, age, gender, marital status, occupation, date of birth (DOB), and religion etc), current complaints of the client and the view about the complaint, the facts about the problem, previous mental problems, medical history, personality (e.g. reaction pattern, diseases, sickness, emotional problems, eating sleeping habits, his behavior, etc.), family information, environment of the family, friends, workplace etc. It means that a complete sketch of the history and the present situation of the client, his strengths and weaknesses, potentials and capabilities, i.e. his internal and external environment is made in the study phase of the problem-solving-process.

2. Diagnosis (thinking about and organizing facts into a meaningful goal-pointed explanation)

Diagnosis-after a complete and thorough study of the client and his problem, the worker then diagnose and asses the problem. How the problems which have been identified by the client and his family are affecting the client or his family, what is the problem and what the client needs to do? The worker find out the extent of the problem i.e. whether it is an intra-personal or inter-personal problem. He also tries to find out the major factors operating in this situation. When the assessment is completed, the workers reached to the actual fact. That is, **what is the actual problem?,** And how all of them are looking upon it. Then the worker tells the client and his family or friends that this is their real problem.

3. Treatment (implementation of conclusions as to what and how of action upon the problem).

Treatment- now we have completed the study and we also have found the actual problem. There is a need of the client to solve this problem. The worker now in

this phase finds out different solutions of the problem and finds the alternative ways for it. On the basis of our study and assessment, we make an action plan for the client. The focus of our plane is to enable the client himself to solve the problem, to feel the actual problem, to think about it and choose an alternative or solution for it.

Finally, for the solution or mitigation of many problems there must exist certain material means or accessible opportunities which are available to the needful person and which he can be helped to use. Kinds of resources that a person may need are money, medical care, nursery schools, scholarships, foster homes, recreation facilities, etc.

V. Professional Representative:

The professional representative in casework is the person whose services are hired by the casework agency. He is the person who has the scientific skills and knowledge about human behavior and human psychology. He has the knowledge about the social problems of the individuals. He is there in the agency to help the individuals, using his skills and experiences, out of the problem. Professional representative is called "caseworker".

THE CONCERNED TOPICS:-

I. RELATIONSHIP IN CASE WORK CLIENT

II. THE PROBLIM SOLVING WORK

I. Relationship in Case Work Client

Case Worker Relationship

The term relationship in social case work was used for first time by Miss. Virginia a Robinson in her book "A changing psychology in Social Case Work" in 1939. Relationship is the channel through which the mobilization of the capacities of the client is made possible. Relationship is the medium through which the client is enabled to state his problem and through which attention can be focused on reality problems, which may be as full of internal conflict with emotional problems. Relationship is the professional meeting of two persons for the purpose of assisting one of them, the client, to make a better, a more acceptable adjustment to personal problem. Professional

relationship involves a mutual process of shared responsibilities, recognition, of other's rights, acceptance of difference to stimulate growth through interaction by creating socialized attitudes and behavior.

Science of Human Relation

Knowledge of science of human relations is necessary. The knowledge of how human personality grows, changes, reacts to stressors normally or abnormally serves as a framework in which the individual client is better understood. To understand individual it is very helpful to know as much as possible about the common characteristics of human nature.

The relationship between the caseworker and the client is the medium through which the knowledge of human nature and of the individual is used. Knowledge alone, without skill in relationship is inadequate. The relationship is the channel of the entire case work process, though it flow the mobilization of the capacities of the individual and the mobilization of the situation and community resources, through the skill in interviewing, study, diagnosis and treatment.

Casework Relationship

The casework relationship is has been compared to an atmosphere, to flesh & blood, to a bridge and to an atmosphere. The essence of the relationship has been call an interplay, a mutual emotional exchange, an attitude, a dynamic interaction, a medium, a connection between two parties (the client and the case worker), a professional mediating and a mutual process. The materials of this dynamic interaction is described as personalities, thoughts, feelings, actions ingredients from both parties and the sum total of all that happens between the participants.

The purpose of the relationship is described as creating an atmosphere, the development of the personality, better solutions to the client's problems, the means of carrying out functions, starting and focusing reality of emotional problems. The relationship has general and specific purposes. More over in some cases the relationship is the principal of treatment. While in others it is an aid to treatment.

The Purpose of casework relationship

In general the purpose of the relationship is a part of the over all-purpose of entire casework process. To help the client which is psychosocial need and problems. In addition the relationship has more proximate purpose. All of which can be categorized as creating an atmosphere in which the client free to engage effectively in the study diagnosis and treatment. Since, each casework situation is individual occurring in agencies with different functions and with clients who differ in personality, needs and problems. The relationship may serve one or more proximate purposes in each case.

Casework Process

Study: The initial phase of the casework relationship is to study the problem faced by the client. This understanding required the information of the social, psychological, economical, health, organizational and related facts on the client's situation. Detailed data gathering and understanding is the purpose of casework relationship in the first phase of interaction.

Diagnosis: Based on the data gathered it is the effort of the caseworker to identify the symptoms of the problem faced whether is emotional, psychosocial or others. A proper diagnosis required the effective understanding and analysis of facts and figures.

Treatment:

In the treatment phase, the caseworker helps the client to understand the problem by himself by detailing and referring all the related facts and figures. In majority cases, the client finds the solution to the problem by himself with the support of the caseworker. While in some cases if the problem is beyond the capacities and abilities to resolve it, there the caseworker refer the case to some treatment agencies and help him to solve the problem.

Conclusion

Many problems situations, which the man meets in his working life, are largely indicative of the nature and scope of social casework in the different setting. The client wants to solve his situations but since by himself he is unable to find the situation he

needs some guidance and some confidence and encouragement and the case worker must extend helping hand to him who deserves empathy, support, advices and solutions to his problems.

II. The Problem solving work

What is a Problem?

A problem exists when a problem solver has a goal but does not know how to accomplish it. Specifically, a problem occurs when a situation is in a given state, a problem solver wants the situation to be in a goal state, and the problem solver is not aware of an obvious way to transform the situation from the given state to the goal state. In his classic monograph, *On Problem Solving*, the Gestalt psychologist Karl Duncker defined a problem as follows:

A problem arises when a living creature has a goal but does not know how this goal is to be reached. Whenever one cannot go from the given situation to the desired situation simply by action, then there has to be recourse to thinking. Such thinking has the task of devising some action, which may mediate between the existing and desired situations. (1945, p. 1)

What is Problem Solving?

According to Mayer and Wittrock, problem solving is "cognitive processing directed at achieving a goal when no solution method is obvious to the problem solver" (2006, p. 287).

This definition consists of four parts: (1) problem solving is cognitive, that is, problem solving occurs within the problem solver's cognitive system and can only be inferred from the problem solver's behavior, (2) problem solving is a process, that is, problem solving involves applying cognitive processes to cognitive representations in the problem solver's cognitive system, (3) problem solving is directed, that is, problem solving is guided by the problem solver's goals, and (4) problem solving is personal, that is, problem solving depends on the knowledge and skill of the problem solver. In sum, problem solving is cognitive processing directed at transforming a problem from the given state to the goal state when the problem solver is not immediately aware of a

solution method.

According to **Princeton's Word Net,** Definitions for problem solving-the area of cognitive psychology that studies the processes involved in solving problems. Problem solving-the thought processes involved in solving a problem.

According to **U.S. National Library of Medicine**-Problem Solving-A learning situation involving more than one alternative from which a selection is made in order to attain a specific goal.

Problem solving is one of the most essential skills in life. Regardless of who you are or what you do, you will face obstacles. How you deal with such challenges will often be a determining factor in how successful you are at life. While problems come in a wide variety of shapes and sizes.

According to **Kendra Cherry**-Problem-solving is a mental process that involves discovering, analyzing and solving problems. The ultimate goal of problem-solving is to overcome obstacles and find a solution that best resolves the issue.

1. The Steps in Problem Solving

The best strategy for solving a problem depends largely on the unique situation. In some cases, people are better off learning everything they can about the issue and then using factual knowledge to come up with a solution. In other instances, creativity and insight are the best options.

In order to correctly solve a problem, it is important to follow a series of steps. Many researchers refer to this as the **problem solving cycle**, which includes developing strategies and organizing knowledge. While this cycle is portrayed sequentially, people rarely follow a rigid series of steps to find a solution. Instead, we often skip steps or even go back through steps multiple times until the desired solution is reached.

1.1 Identifying the Problem: While it may seem like an obvious step, identifying the problem is not always as simple as it sounds. In some cases, people might mistakenly identify the wrong source of a problem, which will make attempts to solve it inefficient or even useless.

1.2 Defining the Problem: After the problem has been identified, it is

important to fully define the problem so that it can be solved.

1.3 Forming a Strategy: The next step is to develop a strategy to solve the problem. The approach used will vary depending upon the situation and the individual's unique preferences.

1.4 Organizing Information: Before coming up with a solution, we need to first organize the available information. What do we know about the problem? What do we *not* know? The more information that is available, the better prepared we will be to come up with an accurate solution.

1.5 Allocating Resources: Of course, we don't always have unlimited money, time and other resources to solve a problem. Before you begin to solve a problem, you need to determine how high priority it is. If it is an important problem, it is probably worth allocating more resources to solving it. If, however, it is a fairly unimportant problem, then you do not want to spend too much of your available resources into coming up with a solution.

1.6 Monitoring Progress: Effective problem-solvers tend to monitor their progress as they work towards a solution. If they are not making good progress toward reaching their goal, they will reevaluate their approach or look for new strategies.

1.7 Evaluating the Results: After a solution has been reached, it is important to evaluate the results to determine if it is the best possible solution to the problem. This evaluation might be immediate, such as checking the results of a math problem to ensure the answer is correct, or it can be delayed, such as evaluating the success of a therapy program after several months of treatment.

2. The Six Step Problem Solving Method

Step 1. Define the Problem in Terms of Needs (Not Competing Solutions)
This is a critical step in problem solving. First, your statement of the problem should be stated in a way that does not communicate blame or judgment. Secondly, after you have stated your feelings, try to verbalize the other person's side of the conflict. If you don't know their side, ask them to state it. Frequently, it will take a while to get the problem or conflict defined accurately. The other person may need to take some time

to get their own feelings off their chest. They may initially get angry or defensive. This is the time to use active listening. They must have a chance to get their feelings out or else they will not be ready for the remaining steps in the problem solving process. Don't be in a hurry. Be sure ,you understand the other's point of view and be sure you state your view accurately and congruently. Before moving to Step 2; be sure both of you accept the definition of the problem. Test this out-ask if they accept that this is the problem you both are going to try to solve. Are both sets of needs accurately stated? Lastly, make certain the other party understands clearly that you both are looking for a solution that will meet both sets of needs, a solution that will be acceptable to both. Nobody is to lose.

Step 2. Generate Possible Solutions

This is the creative part of problem solving. It is frequently hard to come up with a good solution right away. Initial solutions are seldom adequate, but they may stimulate someone coming up with better ones. Ask the other person first if they have any possible solutions -you'll have plenty of time to offer yours. At all cost, avoid being evaluative and critical of their solutions. Use active listening. Treat their ideas with respect. Try to get a number of possible solutions before evaluating or discussing any particular one. Discourage evaluation until a number of possible solutions are generated. Remember you are trying to arrive at the best solution, not just any solution. If things bog down, state the problem again. Sometimes this will start the wheels turning.

Step 3. Evaluate and Test the Various Solutions

This is the stage of problem solving where you must be honest; and, of course, you want the other person to be honest, too. Both of you will want to do a lot of critical thinking. Are there flaws in any of the possible solutions? Any reason why a solution might not work? Will it be too hard to implement or carry out? Is it fair to both? Use active listening. Failure to test solutions at this stage of the process will increase the chance of ending up with a poor solution, or one that will not be carried out earnestly.

Step 4. Decide on a Mutually Acceptable Solution

A mutual commitment to one solution must be made. Usually when all the facts

get exposed, one clearly superior solution stands out. Don't make the mistake of trying to persuade or push a solution on the other. If they don't freely choose, a solution acceptable to them, chances are they will not carry it out. When it appears that perhaps you are close to a decision, state the solution to make ~certain you both understand what you are about to decide. Frequently, writing down the solution will be necessary in order that later misunderstandings can be checked against the decision you both agreed upon.

Step 5. Implementing the Solution

It is of course, one thing to arrive at a creative solution; another to carry it out. Immediately after a solution has been agreed upon, it is generally necessary to talk about implementation.

Who does what by when?

The most constructive attitude to have is one of, complete trust than that the other person will faithfully carry out his part of the decision rather than raise the question of what is to be done if s/he doesn't. Consequently, it is not wise to talk about penalties for failure to implement a solution at this time: However, if later the other person fails to carry out their end of the agreement, confront them with statements. You also may be able to offer suggestions to help them remember to do their job. Don't fall into the trap of reminding the other to carry put his/her tasks -- they will grow dependent upon your reminders rather than assume full responsibility for their own behavior.

Step 6. Evaluate

Not all solutions turn out to be the best. Sometimes you or the other person will discover weaknesses in the solution, in which case the problem should be revisited for more problem solving. Sometimes it is important to go to the other and ask how s/he feels about the solution. Both of you should have an understanding that decisions are always open for revision, but that neither of you can unilaterally modify a decision. Modifications have to be mutually agreed upon, just as the initial decision was.

Sometimes people will over commit themselves in their enthusiasm to solve problems.

Be sure to keep the door open for revision if this happens.